

"my dear lady, when you leave us, you may tell your story to all the world."

They exchanged a quick glance, saying upon the one side: "I understand"; upon the other: "Why should we disguise the truth?"

These men would never let her go until their own safety had been assured beyond all question. And she was too clever a woman either to threaten impotently or to appeal to an unknown sense of honor. Silently, therefore, and without display, she made an examination of the sick man's condition. The wound certainly had an ugly appearance; but it did not wear the aspect of becoming dangerous while common skill was employed. Much more to be observed, she thought, was the curious glance which the youth turned upon her when he opened his eyes. She seemed to read therein an appeal to her confidence, added to a certain apprehension as though she was about to say or do something that would add to his distress. Upon this there followed the conviction that the young soldier was not half so ill as he pretended to be. Indeed, the whole situation both mystified and frightened her. She could not deny the peril of her situation.

"How long is it since this poor fellow was brought here?" she asked, suddenly feeling that she must either speak or betray herself before him.

"Yesterday morning at ten o'clock, mademoiselle."

"And your doctor saw him—"

"Last night at eight o'clock. I perceive that you have not read the 'Journal' this morning. Your angry people accused a philanthropist of spying upon them, and killed him in the café last night with less mercy than they would show to a dog."

"As they would kill you and all in this house if they were aware of your presence, Captain."

"Precisely, mademoiselle. I am perfectly acquainted with the fact; but observe the fraternal spirit which animates me. Here is a young gentleman from Cologne risking his soul for a cause dear to my Emperor. Shall I leave him to die there, that I may save my own skin? Not a bit of it! I remember the name of a charitable lady in Paris, and find a safe way of communicating with her. I pay her all honor; promise her that immediately her work is done—and it can be accomplished safely—I will send her back to her own home. Her comfort also shall be studied. While her poor countrymen are starving, we, pleasing that ironical female they call Fate, have abundance and to spare. Mademoiselle, consider yourself the mistress of this house for the time being. And permit me to say that I will hang the man who does not obey your orders."

It had a fine ring, and, in so far as it spoke of courtesy, Dolores could not be displeased by it. None the less, this obsequious man, with so many lies upon his lips, annoyed her; and, as much to be rid of him as for any other purpose, she began her work, and begged him to send her assistance.

"I must have hot water," she said. "And of course you have the necessary dressings in the house, Captain?"

"They shall be sent to you without loss of time, mademoiselle. Permit me to leave you for an instant. There are ways and means, if you have need of anything from any shop in Paris. I will go and see about it, mademoiselle."

He left the room, closing the door behind him. In the same instant the wounded man raised himself up in the bed, and, clutching Dolores by the arm, he drew her face down toward him, as though he feared to raise his voice above a whisper.

"I am a Frenchman! For God's sake, keep my secret!" he said.

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Captain Collingwood, as he styled himself, had boasted of the luxury which he and his men enjoyed, while Paris, without, lived upon the brink of absolute starvation. At the dinner-table, one hour after she had entered Count Brachelli's house,

Dolores put these boasts to the test, and admitted their justice. A better dinner rarely had been offered to her, even at the Café Anglais. The room in which they served it had been the countess' own boudoir, overlooking the faubourg, and superbly furnished. Heavy shutters, however, now were closed upon its long windows; and her apparent liberty in no way deceived so clever a woman as

was no remarkable thing that their houses should be shut up. Paris had too much to do to inquire after the faint hearts, a fact which these shrewd men must have remembered when they constituted themselves Count Brachelli's guests. Here, indeed, they might account themselves safe; and their *coup de théâtre* in compelling her to come to the house

appeared to Dolores to be in keeping with that amazing boldness she could not but admire.

She thought of these things while a stolid German trooper served her dinner and condescended to discuss with her such trifles of news as he believed to be interesting. If she heard him with impatience, it was because her clever brain had set itself earnestly to this task of her deliverance, and that many ideas were presenting themselves to her for consideration, and as often being rejected.

From time to time, when the door of the room stood open, she heard footsteps upon the marble pavement of the hall below; and so she became convinced that her enemies were not two or three, but it may be twenty or thirty. The house, apparently, had become the refuge of a little

colony of German soldiers and spies.

Their disguises took all shapes, as she was to learn presently. Some of them boldly wore the uniforms of French regulars or mobiles. Others donned artisans' blouses or workmen's smocks. She saw one dandy dressed as a boulevardier, evidently told off for work in the fashionable quarters. But all without distinction were obedient to the orders of the apologetic Captain Collingwood; and Dolores heard his voice frequently raised in rasping command, or more lightly in some childish humor. Not Captain Collingwood, however, but another, a younger man, dressed as a French cavalry officer, met her upon the landing when she left the dinner-table, and reminded her immediately of her situation.

"Mademoiselle Morizon, I understand?"

She bowed, and would have passed him by.

"I am glad it is you," he went on awkwardly. "Of course, you are the friend of our people? That's what I told Captain Muller. 'She saved Albert Muntz's life,' I said, 'and she'll do the same for young Eberhart.' You give them your word to say nothing, mademoiselle, and there'll be no trouble about this—just go and come as you please. That's what I told Captain Muller."

She made a gesture of despair. "Your conversations with Captain Muller do not interest me!" she exclaimed abruptly. "Pray, let me pass, sir!"

He did not budge from his place. "Oh, come," he cried, "you're not going to be angry? Such a pretty little woman too! Wait until old Muller goes foraging, and we'll have some fun together. Don't you see we are all frightened of old Muller?"

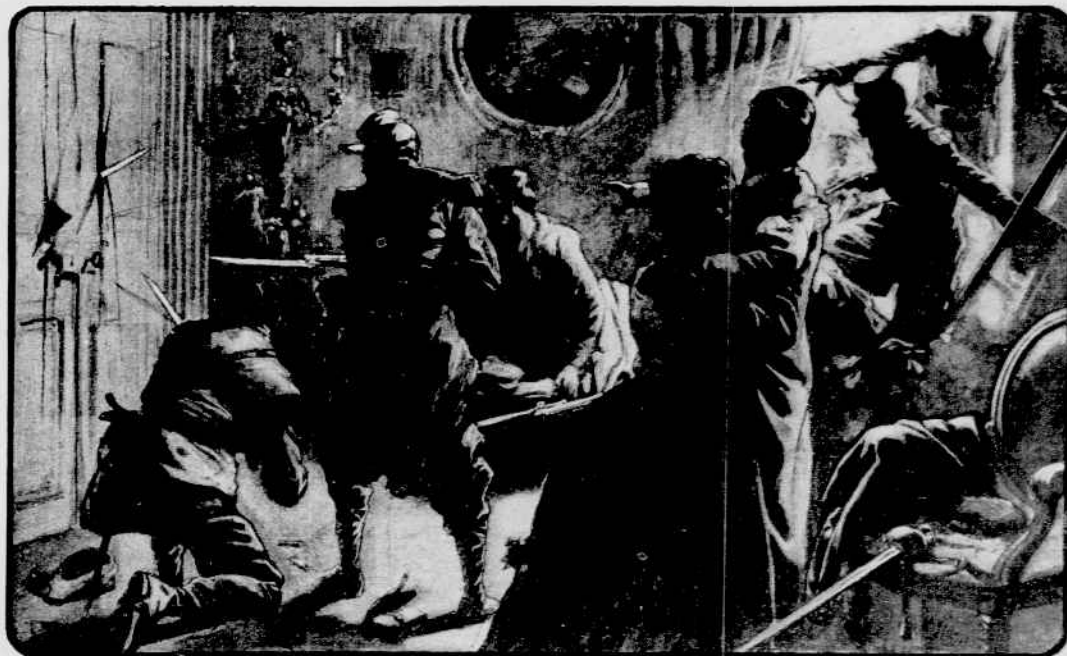
He leered in an ugly way, and put out a hand, touching her upon the shoulder in a manner at once patronizing and familiar; but quick as light she slipped by him and entered the bed-room where the sick man lay. The perils of the house could be disguised no longer. If this Captain Muller left her alone with such men as she just had encountered, then indeed would it become a house terrible! The very danger spurred her wits until the ideas galloped into her brain. She must save herself and the lad whose life lay at these men's mercy. The moments were few, but precious. She would not lose one of them.

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She closed the bed-room door and approached the sleeper cautiously. He had been dozing, but the sound of her footsteps awoke him, and he sat up at once upon her approach. None of the Germans had followed her to the room, but she understood that her moments of grace would be brief enough. And she must learn this lad's story before any returned.

"Who are you? What is your name?" she asked in a low voice. He replied with a rapidity of utterance which betokened the extremity of fear: "Raphael Decroix—in the service of the

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Orlopp Uttered His One Command: "Spare None—To the Last Man, Sergeant!"

Dolores Morizon. She was convinced that men watched her while she ate.

Conscious of an unseen presence, nevertheless, she could not have said: "The man is here, the man is there." And indeed the shame of the secret of that house and its amazing audacity were excuse enough for all her perplexity and that complete absence of idea that now afflicted her.

She knew not what to do, whether to turn for aid, or by what means to seek it. Not alone her honor, but the life of the young Frenchman upstairs, depended, perhaps, upon her wit and resource in that desperate hour; for she had guessed the young man's story, and she knew beyond any need of words that he was a spy upon spies, a fellow-countryman in peril, a servant of France. And she would save him, whatever the consequences, if his salvation lay in her power.

This idea, it may be, led her to accept such courtesy as the Germans offered her, and to sit alone at the dinner-table in Countess Brachelli's boudoir. The audacity of these men, their splendid daring, could not but win a certain homage from her. Here they were—Heaven alone knew how many of them—living a luxurious life in this great deserted house, spying daily upon all that the French generals did, sending to Moltke their news of the city and its misfortunes, and with it all as safe, apparently, as though they had been abed in their own homes in Germany. Who would look for them in such a place? The nobles of the Faubourg St-Germain mostly had fled before the war. It

GONE FISHING

By Clinton Dangerfield

God made the world for fishermen—
For us the small waves flash.
For us the scarlet berries crown
The lake's encircling ash.

For us the clouds are milky pearls
Set in a turquoise's blue.
For us yon eagle solemnly
His winged circle drew.

"What luck?" If luck were always good,
The chiefest joy were gone
The lure of sweet uncertainty
Still draws us on and on.

The dimpling waters softly smile,
And underneath them lies,
Shadowed by some mysterious rock,
The swift, elusive prize.

The glory of his golden scales
A king's reward might be.
Fail we to-day? To-morrow's fly
Shall take him cunningly.